

# **EXTRACTS**

FROM THE

**EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH REPORTS**

OF THE

**DIRECTORS**

OF THE

**AFRICAN INSTITUTION,**

READ AT THEIR

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS,**

*Held in London on the 11th day of May, 1824, and on the 13th  
day of May, 1825.*

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**PHILADELPHIA :**

**PRINTED BY JOSEPH R. A. SKERRETT.**

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**1826.**

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## INTRODUCTION.

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**THE** exertions of the British nation for terminating the African slave-trade, and the increasing abhorrence with which that inhuman traffic is viewed, afford encouragement to christians in every part of the world, to contribute their efforts to banish this dreadful scourge from the face of the earth. Among no people, should a detestation of this commerce be more keenly felt, nor endeavours for its repression more earnestly made, than by the citizens of these United States. Declaring as they do in the face of the world, that all men are born free, and possessed of the unalienable right to the enjoyment of liberty and happiness, they should not rest satisfied with denouncing the trade in human beings as piracy, but their exertions should be unceasing, until this horrible commerce is totally extinguished. A just opprobrium has been stamped on this nefarious business; but let them not suppose, that the blood of this people is thereby washed from their hands, and that the part for them to perform in annihilating the sufferings and atoning for the wrongs of abused Africa, is fully accomplished. Are not Americans indirectly concerned in this abominable commerce, and still deriving large profits from it? There is strong ground to believe that this is the fact.

Remotely situated as the citizens of the United States are from the immediate operations and horrors of the African slave-trade, and relying on their positive disavowal of all participation in it, they may fold their arms and conclude that little remains for them to do. But the trade in human beings still exists, and is conducted with all its fatal effects, and to an unprecedented extent. Shall they then view with indifference and almost entire apathy, the accumulation of wrath and outrage, which is visited upon this people, their brethren and sisters, equally with them the objects of tender mercy and redeeming grace, and possessing the very same right with themselves, to that liberty, in which the great Creator originally placed the whole human family. Whilst there remains a ves-

tige of this unnatural commerce, let them co-operate with other governments in firmly and steadily remonstrating against it. The public voice in favour of immutable justice must eventually prevail. France, the great patron of the African slave-trade, is beginning to feel its force, and we have good reason to believe that the spirit and light of christianity are softening the hearts and illuminating the eyes of multitudes, to a just sense of the enormity and unnaturalness of such a horrible system.

The African Institution in London, merits the approbation of all who wish the extinction of the slave-trade. Such a body of evidence, as is exhibited in their annual reports could not be procured, nor would the world be possessed of a just estimate of the incredible extent, and manifold cruelties of the slave-trade, without the unwearied labours of such an association. Interested as we are in the general subject, the publication of abstracts of their eighteenth and nineteenth reports, will, we would hope, kindle and spread renewed zeal in behalf of this injured people, and thus contribute in some small degree, to urge forward the work of their complete emancipation from the cruel grasp of the merciless trader.

# EXTRACTS

FROM THE

## EIGHTEENTH REPORT, &c.

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### NETHERLANDS.

THE Eighteenth Report of "The Directors of the African Institution, read at the Annual General Meeting held on the 11th day of May, 1824," states that an additional treaty "was signed at Brussels on the 31st of December, 1822, for more effectually suppressing the Dutch slave-trade." Its provisions are highly important, giving to our cruizers a right of seizing Dutch ships, not only when they have slaves actually on board, or when they have had them on board but have landed them in order to elude capture, but when they are found, within certain limits, with an outfit and equipment which show them to be *intended* for the slave-trade.

### SPAIN.

It is now made the law of Spain, that all captains, masters, and pilots of Spanish vessels, who purchase negroes on the coast of Africa, or introduce them into any part of the Spanish monarchy, or are found with slaves on board their vessels, shall lose their vessels, and be sentenced to ten years' hard labour on the public works. It is to be regretted that these penalties should be so limited in their operation. They ought to extend to all Spanish subjects engaged in the slave-trade, as principals or agents.

The letters of the British Commissioners at the Havanna, however, clearly show, that, notwithstanding this law, nothing has been effectually done to prevent the importation of slaves into the island of Cuba. "In the present defective state of the Spanish law," they say, writing on the 22d of

July, 1822, "it is not surprising that such transactions should be carried on with impunity. Your lordship is aware, that the decree of his Catholic Majesty, issued in consequence of our slave-trade treaty, is conceived in the most loose and vague terms. Its execution is not committed to any particular department, and is therefore neglected by all. And, above all, no reward is offered to the informer: so that, in this contraband traffic which is the most easily carried on, and in the continuation of which almost every man in the island is interested, no recompence is granted for its detection, although in all other smuggling transactions the judge and the informer both receive considerable shares of the confiscated property. It is probable, therefore, that, so long as the law in question remains unaltered, it will continue, as hitherto, to be a mere dead letter."

The importation of slaves into Cuba is chiefly effected under the French and Portuguese flags. But, notwithstanding the risks attending it, and the penal inflictions denounced against it, the Spanish flag also is still employed in this proscribed traffic.

The records of the mixed commission court of Sierra Leone, during the year 1822, exhibit six cases of Spanish ships condemned for slave-trading. In addition to these, the Sierra Leone Gazette specifies several Spanish slave-ships which had been detained by his majesty's cruisers in 1823; and several more, evidently the property of Spaniards, but which were protected from capture by the French flag. One of these cases is thus alluded to in the Sierra Leone Gazette of the 11th Oct. 1823:—

"In our last we mentioned, that a Spanish vessel, under French colours, was purchasing slaves at Shebar. With the deepest feelings of horror and pain we now have to acquaint our readers, that we have since received information that her anchoring off Shebar has been followed with the usual scenes of blood, inseparable from such a criminal traffic. The natives who reside about forty miles in the interior, (the Cossous,) being anxious to open a communication with the sea, in order to receive rum, powder, or muskets, on *easy terms*, have accordingly moved down in large numbers, carrying fire and

devastation with them. Eight villages have been destroyed: the peaceable inhabitants, who did not perish in the ferocious attacks, have been made slaves; and such as were fit for market were bartered and sold to the European villain who commands the vessel, who styles himself, sometimes, Monsieur Jonquille, at other times Don Jonquillo." This person it is added, has, within eighteen months, by means of this nefarious association of the French flag with Spanish interests, shipped off five cargoes from the same spot.

"Havanna, August 30, 1822.

"We are happy to have an opportunity of reporting to your lordship a case in which the present local government here has manifested a disposition to check illicit traffic in slaves.

"On the 9th instant, the American brig Eros, J. Demeron, master, entered this port from Baltimore, having on board forty-two negroes. She was said to be bound to New Orleans, and to have come in here in distress. It is, however generally believed that the negroes were intended to have been disposed of at this place, if that could have been done with advantage to the proprietor.

"As soon as the Captain-General was apprised of the circumstance of negroes being on board of this vessel, he ordered her to put to sea with the least delay possible, and directed that a guard should be sent on board, in order to prevent the negroes from being landed, and maintained at her expense, during her stay in this port. The vessel sailed again for New Orleans, with the forty-two negroes on board, on the 11th instant." p. 60.

#### PORTUGAL.

During the year 1822, thirteen Portuguese slave-ships, having on board upwards of 1700 slaves, were condemned at Sierra Leone, for trading in slaves north of the line. Some of the cases involved perjuries without end, and atrocities of the most outrageous and revolting kind, and implicated in the guilt attending them Portuguese functionaries on the coast of Africa of the very highest class; and all of the cases afforded proofs of the most reprehensible disregard, on the part of the Brazilian authorities, of the stipulations of the treaties with this country. The licences granted to these ships permitted them, while their destination was declared to be to Africa south of the line, to visit St. Thomas's, Cameroons, Calabar, &c. which no motive could be assigned for their visiting, but that of carrying on an illicit slave-trade. Nay, the authorities in Brazil appear to have concurred with the contrabandists,

in giving fictitious names to places north of the line, borrowed from places south of the line, for the purpose of deceiving the British cruisers and the mixed commission courts. The name of Molembo, a place south of the line, to which the Portuguese slave-trade is still permitted, has been transferred, for this profligate purpose, to a place near Onim, in the Bight of Benin.

In the case of one vessel, the *Conde de Villa Flor*, taken with 172 slaves on board, it was fully proved, "that the governor of Bissao was himself an interested participator in the illegal embarkation of slaves, a certain number of the slaves being his property; some of them being entered in the memoranda as shipped and received from his official residence—as if all decency was cast off from the government of the settlement." Such is the strong, but most appropriate, language of the judge of the mixed commission court. The examinations in this case develop the most complicated tissue of fraudulent expedients for defeating the ends of justice;—among them, fabricated log-books, exhibiting a voyage from the Brazils to Cabenda, by way of the Cape de Verds, when the real destination was Bissao; and schedules pointing out the bribes by which the connivance of the judge, governor, &c. was to be secured at the port of discharge in the Brazils. This vessel had already made several very successful and gainful voyages under the shelter of these ingenious expedients. The owner, in one of his letters, declared his intention of putting an end, by this voyage, to his course of slave-trading, as, "provided," he says, "that it were the pleasure of the Almighty that every thing should be placed in safety, they would have reaped a good harvest." In consequence, it may be presumed, of his capture on this occasion, which prevented his gathering the fruits he had anticipated, he appears, by the *Sierra Leone Gazette*, to have returned to the coast in the succeeding year, and to have successfully effected another voyage.

The directors will give the particulars of only one other case.

The Portuguese schooner-boat, *San Jose Xalaça*, belonging to a lady of Prince's Island, the daughter of Gomez, formerly

the Governor and still a member of the governing junta of that island, though only of the burden of seven tons, was sent to Calabar for slaves. Thirty slaves were purchased, and, having been put on board the boat, it made sail for Prince's Island. But the voyage proved tedious; provisions began to fail, and the allowance of food was reduced to one yam daily for two slaves. At last the provisions and water wholly failed. Ten slaves perished; and the whole must have shared their fate had not the vessel got back to Calabar, after having been six weeks at sea. The surviving slaves were in the most deplorable state of emaciation and wretchedness. Nor was this to be wondered at; for, besides their privations, they were manacled together, and cooped up in a vessel of only seven tons burden; having no shelter but what could be afforded by the space between the water casks and the deck, a space of seven inches!

Our government made use of these and other circumstances, as they occurred, to press upon Portugal, with an earnestness that does the highest credit to its zeal in this cause, the necessity of a more vigorous enforcement of her own laws, and of her treaties with this country; but apparently with little effect. Some fresh articles indeed were at length agreed to, similar to those adopted by Spain and the Netherlands, for enlarging the power of cruizers; but they have not yet been ratified.

On the separation of Brazil from the mother country, Mr. Canning lost no time in representing to the Portuguese government, that there could now remain no pretence for refusing entirely to abolish the slave-trade. It had been prolonged by Portugal solely for the sake of Brazil; and it now only remained to prohibit it entirely, under the Portuguese flag, to the south as well as to the north of the line. To this application, however, the most peremptory negative was given; and a threat was even held out, that, if Great Britain should proceed on this principle, Portugal would at once consider all her treaties with Great Britain as null and void. The necessity of continuing the traffic was also maintained, on a ground which until now had never been urged, or even heard of, and which is unfounded in point of fact; namely, that the slave-



trade is required for supplying, not Brazil, which, it is now discovered, does not need them, but its other African and Asiatic possessions, with labourers.

What conduct may have been pursued by the Brazilian government on this subject, is not known; but, undoubtedly, that pursued by Portugal is calculated to produce the most indignant feelings in every humane and liberal mind.

In the year 1822, it appears that 28,246 slaves were imported into Rio de Janeiro alone, from the coast of Africa. The number embarked had been 31,240,—3,484 having died on the passage. In one vessel, containing 492 slaves, 194 had died; in another, containing 631,—213 had died; in a third, containing 418,—215 had died, &c. &c.

The number imported into Bahia, in the same year, was upwards of 8000.

#### FRANCE.

The largest chapter in this calamitous detail must be given, it is to be feared, to France. The remonstrances to that power have been frequently and urgently, but unavailingly, renewed by Sir Charles Stuart, our minister at Paris. A few extracts from these remonstrances, while they will prove the vigilance of our government, and of their representative at Paris, will afford, at the same time, an instructive view of the manner in which France has fulfilled her engagements. On the 7th of April 1822, he thus addresses the Count de Villele:—

“ A succession of fresh outrages renders it again my duty to observe to your excellency, that the pledge given to his Britannic majesty by the king of France, for the effectual abolition of the slave-trade, remains unredeemed.

“ At a moment when the enactments of the American and Spanish legislatures have shown the cordial inclination of those nations to concur in measures for the attainment of an object so important to humanity, the official advices received by his Britannic majesty’s government from Sierra Leone, dated in January, prove that this detestable traffic still exists in full activity on the African coast, covered and protected by the flag of France.

“ During the months of July and August last, the leeward

coast being visited by British cruizers, three French slave-traders, as by the enclosed list, were met with and examined in the Calabar river.

“At the same period, the river Bonny was found swarming with slave-traders; and your excellency is furnished with a list of the vessels which abused and disgraced the French flag, four having their cargoes on board.

“On the line of coast between Sierra Leone and Cape Mount, one of his Britannic majesty’s vessels, during a cruise only of ten days, fell in with nine French slave-traders, of which I likewise transmit your excellency the names.

“Though these facts sufficiently show your excellency the advantage taken of the inadequacy of the regulations of France to put a stop to this odious traffic, there are other cases in which particulars cannot be obtained. Accounts of undoubted authority, and of recent date, from the factory of the Gallinas, state, that, in the course of last summer, three slave-vessels under French colours were lying in that port; that a large slave-vessel, fully laden, had sailed from Shebar under the same flag, ten days before; and that, about the same time, in the river Pongas, a French schooner, M. Dees master, took on board ninety-five slaves; while, besides the ordinary exportation in large vessels, an extensive carrying trade is kept up with the Cape de Verd Islands, principally by the small craft belonging to Goree and Senegal.

“There seems, indeed, to be scarcely a spot on that coast, which does not show traces of the slave-trade, with all its attendant horrors; for, the arrival of a slave-ship in any of the rivers on the windward coast being the signal for war between the natives, the hamlets of the weaker party are burnt, and the miserable survivors carried and sold to the slave-traders.

“It is clearly ascertained, by inquiries made on the spot, and on the adjacent coast, by his majesty’s cruizers, that the number of slave cargoes taken out of the river Bonny, in the preceding year, amounted actually to one hundred and ninety; and a similar return from the Calabar, for the like period, made a total, for that river alone, of one hundred and sixty-two.

"I have received the express commands of the king my master, to address to the government of his most christian majesty an urgent representation of these distressing facts, which, if they prove any thing, prove that wherever the French flag appears, protection and impunity are granted to the slave-trader; and that the abuse of the laws enacted in France against this traffic, notwithstanding the allegations of the party disposed to encourage the mischief, afford practical examples of the consequences which must result from this evil, by occasioning encroachments on the territories of friendly powers in Africa, and exciting bloody wars among the natives.

"The magnitude of the evil must compel the French government now to determine, whether they will refuse to execute their engagements, and sit down under the imputation of being the power to whom all those interested in such a cause, turn their eyes as the avowed protector of this commerce; or vindicate their character for good faith and humanity in the eyes of the rest of the world, by assimilating their legislation to that of those countries which have the greatest interest in maritime and colonial affairs."

Similar remonstrances were subsequently made; and, in particular, the remarkable fact was pointed out to the French government, that notwithstanding all the professions that had been made of a desire to repress the slave-trade, the Comodore Mauduit Du Plessis, commanding the French naval force on the coast of Africa, had declared that he had no instructions from his superiors which authorized him to seize any French vessels, though manifestly intended for the slave-trade, which had not slaves actually on board.

The replies of the French Minister to these remonstrances are particularly deserving of notice. They will be found to be any thing but satisfactory. In October, 1822, M. de Villele remarks; "Up to the present time, the king's government had imagined that it had sufficiently proved the firm resolution it had always entertained, of repressing that odious traffic. The severity which it has displayed, whenever it has been possible to bring it to conviction, would appear to remove all doubt on this subject. In this respect, I shall

therefore abstain from enlarging upon the refutation of allegations, which, I repeat, are already sufficiently disproved, no less by its actions than by its well known resolutions. I do not deny that certain avaricious speculators may have risked such expeditions in defiance of the laws; but these are only infractions, such as no government can altogether prevent; and perhaps it might not be impossible for me to discover, even in England itself, more or less recent instances of this nature. The king's government has been neither less active nor less severe than the English government, in detecting and punishing them. The measures which it has taken in this respect are such as it has judged necessary to ensure, in the most effectual manner, the execution of its own arrangements with regard to an object the importance of which it duly appreciates."

Again, on the 22d of November, 1822: "I have received, with the letter which your excellency did me the honour to address to me, the list of vessels which appear to have been engaged in the slave-trade during the first months of the present year. It must be confessed, that among them are to be found certain French vessels, though they never form the majority. This circumstance, which, doubtless, has not escaped your excellency's notice, will serve to convince you that the king's government is not neglectful of any measures of surveillance which lie within its power, in order to repress this odious traffic. Several severe examples which have been made, and punishments which have been decreed against those who have engaged therein, have already proved that the French government is no less earnest on the subject than that of England."

"I have lost no time in submitting to the Minister of Marine the observations which your excellency transmitted to me, relative to the measures adopted in England with respect to such vessels as, without actually having slaves on board, shall appear by their construction to be intended for this kind of trade. I doubt not that these measures will receive a strict examination on the part of the Marquis de Clermont-Tonnerre, since they may be made to promote the means of repression."

A few observations seem to be called for by the statements of M. de Villele.

No one will deny, that in England there is a deep and general feeling adverse to the slave-trade; that not only naval and revenue officers, but private individuals also, have a powerful motive to vigilance in the large rewards they receive for the discovery of slave-trading transactions; and that voluntary associations exist for the suppression of this traffic, composed of men little likely to slumber over the infraction of the abolition laws. If, then, under these circumstances, the French government has been neither less active nor less sincere than the English government, how has it happened that not one instance of slave-trading under the English flag should have been detected during the last ten years, whilst the instances of French slave-trading should have been absolutely innumerable? How happens it also that, notwithstanding the multiplied proofs which the French government has had of the utter inefficacy of the present laws in repressing the slave trade, it should still refuse to affix an infamous punishment to the crime; while in England the crime is assimilated to piracy? And how happens it lastly, that, while from England not a slave-ship can be shown to have been fitted out during the last year, indeed for many years previous, it *can* be shown that from the single port of Nantz no fewer than thirty slave-ships were fitted out, in the course of only a few months of the year 1823, openly, with scarcely an attempt at concealment, and with the full knowledge and participation of multitudes in that port? The details on this subject will be given in another place. Suffice it to say, that slave-ships under the French flag still actually swarm upon the African coast; that they carry on their trade there with perfect impunity, being visited even by French cruizers without molestation; and, that, in consequence of their immunity from British capture, they not only protect extensive interests properly French, but shelter the criminal adventurers of other nations from detection and punishment.

These things have been brought under the notice of the French government, in all their horrid and disgusting details, and the French slave-trade still proceeds as actively as

before. A list, indeed, has been exhibited, with a view to repel the imputation of supineness on the part of the French government, of the prosecutions which have been instituted on account of infractions of the prohibitory laws of France. This list, however, on being carefully examined, will really be found to prove nothing but the inefficacy of those laws, and the enormous extent to which the French slave-trade is carried on. It comprises all cases occurring since the prohibition of the slave-trade by France down to the end of July, 1823, and exhibits a total of 49 ships acquitted, 30 condemned, and 31 undecided. The list, however, is obviously most inaccurate, the same ship sometimes appearing under two of the heads; besides which, it may afford some means of appreciating its value, as an exculpatory document, when the meeting is told, that among the vessels *acquitted* are to be found the *Fox*, the *Succès*, and the notorious *Rodeur*. Even of the thirty vessels condemned, nearly half were condemned at the Isle of Bourbon, through the zeal and activity of that excellent governor, General Mylius, and were almost all petty traders belonging to the island; and four were vessels seized by British cruizers and sent to French ports, and proceeded against only in consequence of such seizure.

What France will do under these circumstances remains to be seen. No one can doubt for a moment, that it is completely in the power of the French government to put an end to the slave-trade if it pleases; but it is no less obvious, that, while the penalties attached to it are merely pecuniary, no degree of vigilance on the part of public functionaries can prevent its being carried on, so long as the profits will pay for insurance.

But, while the directors deplore most deeply the course of proceeding pursued by the French government respecting the slave-trade, and the failure of every hope which had been encouraged by its reiterated assurances that effectual measures of repression would be adopted, and by its warm professions of attachment to the cause of humanity; they feel, at the same time, the most lively satisfaction in contemplating the interest which the subject begins to excite in France. The meeting is already aware, that about two years ago a commit-

tee was instituted in Paris for the abolition of the slave-trade, consisting of many distinguished individuals. Their proceedings have been marked by an enlightened zeal; and they have been employed in diffusing, from time to time, such information as was likely to awaken a more extensive feeling in favour of the African cause.

#### SWEDEN.

An instance of a vessel found trading under the Swedish flag, on the African coast, in July, 1822, led to a correspondence with the Swedish government, which has produced a most satisfactory result. A royal ordinance, bearing date the 7th of February, 1823, has been promulgated by his Swedish majesty, to the following effect :—

“ We, Charles John, do hereby declare, that, desiring most carefully to maintain the principles which have been adopted by our father, King Charles the Thirteenth of glorious memory, and which are conformable to our own sentiments, against the traffic of slaves, have found it expedient hereby to declare, that Swedish and Norwegian vessels, which shall be employed in the slave-trade, shall lose, by this contravention of our orders, our royal protection, and that of our officers and functionaries; that we shall see with satisfaction, discovered and punished every use which may be made of the Swedish and Norwegian flag, in the prosecution of this odious traffic; and that, in consequence, all vessels which shall be found participating in the slave-trade under Swedish and Norwegian colours, shall be looked upon as not carrying those colours: which shall hereafter be considered as law.”

In addition to this frank and honourable declaration, the Swedish monarch has also promised that the most rigid orders shall be given to prevent any fraudulent proceedings from taking place at the Swedish island of St. Bartholomew's, for the purpose of covering slave-trading practices.

A Convention will probably be framed, between this country and Sweden, on the basis of the above proclamation.

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Sir Robert Mends, whose subsequent loss the directors and the country at large have deeply to deplore, in a letter to the

Admiralty, dated the 26th June, 1822, makes the following important observations:—

“The facts which have come to my knowledge, in my opinion, go far to establish this point, that the slave-trade will never be suppressed till the right of search be freely admitted, and every ship found with slaves on board, or evidently engaged in slaving, be liable to condemnation to such ship of war of any nation as may seize her.” While the slave-trade lasts, as a man can readily convert the person of another into cash, “with much less trouble than he could raise the hundredth part of the value by labour,” “it gives rise to every sort of dissipation and licentiousness, leading the mind of the more active of the natives away from the less productive and slower pursuits of agriculture and commerce.” But “wherever the traffic in slaves has been checked, the natives appear to have shown a fair and reasonable desire of cultivating the natural productions of their country. Our resident officers and merchants agree in asserting, that these would be raised to any extent for which a market could be found. I presume this is as much as could be expected from any people in a state of nature.”

“I am informed, it is almost impossible to credit the extent to which the slave-trade has been carried on in the Bonny; there having actually sailed from that river, between the months of July and November last year, 126 slave vessels, eighty-six of which were French, and the others Spaniards.

“An immense number have already sailed this year; and I find many more are expected, and have ascertained, from good authority, that they will generally be under the French flag—that is, they sail, with their slaving cargoes on board, from the Havanna, to a port in France, and there clear out, come to this coast under the pretence of purchasing palm oil and ivory, ship their slaves, and return to the coasts of Cuba thus inhumanly laden.”

“By the annexed boarding list, it will appear to their lordships, that, within a very short period, the ships of war on this coast have boarded forty-five vessels engaged in the slave-trade; viz.



French	-	-	-	-	-	-	19
Portuguese	-	-	-	-	-	-	19
Spanish	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
Swedish	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
							—
Total	-	-	-	-	-	-	45
							—

Of which, sixteen were captured, having on board 2,481 slaves. These are facts substantiated by unquestionable proofs; and show, beyond the possibility of doubt or contradiction, the preponderance of France and Portugal in this traffic."

"I have not heard of either American or Dutch ships being on the coast engaged in the traffic of slaves; if they be at all, it is not frequently, and they are well covered; but I am given to understand, from good authority, that in the Brazils, especially at Bahia, ships' papers are manufactured with great facility, and that every vessel, which puts to sea from that port, has generally French, Spanish and Portuguese papers, colours, and captains."

"Their lordships being already acquainted with the desperate attack made by the French and Spanish slave-ships in the river Bonny, in last April, on the boats of this ship and the Myrmidon, which ended in the capture of the whole of those ships; I feel it incumbent on me to mention a combination said to be entered into, by the officers and crews of the whole of those vessels, by which they bound themselves to put to death every English officer or man, belonging to the navy, who might fall into their hands on the coast of Africa. This was in perfect unison with all and every thing which the slave-dealing has engendered. Of a similar nature was the agreement between the Spanish captains and their seamen; the latter binding themselves *blindly to obey every order, of whatever nature it might be*, and, in case of the vessel being taken, not to receive any wages. Such is the depravity to which this slave-trade debases the mind and the character of the desperate banditti engaged in it. These outlaws and robbers assume any flag, as best suits their purpose at the time.

“It is needless, sir, to swell this report with repeated instances of the cruelty and savage feeling to which this trade gives rise, in every shape of cool premeditated murder and shameless atrocity which avarice and a total disregard for the victims of it can suggest, as it best suits interested purposes. This has been laid before the world by writers perfectly competent to the subject. Nor let it be supposed, that any description of it has been too animated ; it is impossible it could be so. It is necessary to visit a slave-ship, to know what the trade is.”

“Wherever this baneful trade exists, the civil arts of life recede, commerce disappears, and man becomes doubly ferocious. It is scarcely to be believed, that an attempt was made to blow up a vessel, with upwards of 300 slaves on board, almost all of them in irons, by her crew hanging a lighted match over the magazine, when they abandoned her in their boats, and the *Iphigenia* took possession of her. Were this a solitary instance of the feeling which it elicits, it ought of itself to induce every European government to take effectual measures for its suppression ; but, while succeeding years only bring forward a repetition of similar deeds, varied alone in form and guilt, hypocrisy itself scarcely dares to couple the name of Christian with that of its protectors.”

“In bringing this Report to a close, it would afford me much real satisfaction, were I enabled, from what I have seen and heard on the coast of Africa, to hold out to their lordships any idea of the slave-trade appearing to diminish: the reverse is, I believe, the fact; for it is seen with fearless impudence establishing itself throughout immense territories, in open defiance of every restraint, particularly by the subjects of France, Spain, and Portugal, whose ships engaged in it are numerous beyond belief.”

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*Extracts from the Nineteenth Report.*

There has been hitherto no opportunity of advantageously resuming the conferences on the slave-trade which were adjourned from Verona to London. No general regulation

therefore has been adopted for its repression: but some progress has been made, in two instances, by individual treaties, towards affixing on this traffic its proper name and character, as a violation of the law of nature, and of nations, and of the common rights of humanity. All dealing in slaves by British subjects, from the 1st of January of the present year, has been declared piracy by act of parliament.

The Swedish government had previously published an ordinance putting her subjects engaged in it, out of the protection of the law; and a treaty has since been concluded between his majesty and the king of Sweden, for the more effectual suppression of the slave-trade, which provides the necessary measures for carrying the above declaration into execution.

A treaty of a similar description, founded on the same reciprocal recognition of the piratical nature of the trade, was negotiated between this country and the United States. Some difficulties arose in respect of its ratification; but every modification which could possibly be admitted in order to meet the views of that power having been adopted by this country, a new treaty has been arranged accordingly, and sent out to America.

America has shared with ourselves, (except as far as she inherited it from us,) the guilt of slavery; with the additional misfortune of having become habituated to view it face to face;—but she has, nevertheless, manifested her sense of the injustice and unnaturalness of the African slave-trade too strongly, to leave it possible that, under any feeling of maritime jealousy, or the remains of national irritation, she will long continue to refuse the permission of mutual search; in other words, the only practical expedient, for applying those principles which she has published to the world. It is nothing merely to give the crime the name of piracy, if the means of suppressing it, as such, are to be withheld. In that event the regulations of Spain, and the Netherlands, will be much more really efficacious; who, if they have not yet described the offence under its proper class, have nevertheless, by agreeing to the right of visiting and of examining suspected vessels, put into the hands of other countries an instrument for securing the due execution of their law.

*Extract from "the Royal Gazette and Sierra Leone Advertiser," 2nd April, 1825.*

"We are credibly informed that three vessels, under American colours, are at this moment upon the coast for slaves:—one of them the Baltimore-built schooner, General Winder, Hill master, last from St. Thomas, carries 10 guns and a numerous crew; all of whom, with the master, are citizens of the United States. This vessel and another have their cargoes on shore at the Galinas and Cape Mount, the remaining one at Shebar. Thus we see these miscreants taking advantage of the absence of any American cruizer, and openly violating the laws of their country, notwithstanding the heavy punishment it subjects them to. We have here occasion to regret the failure of the negociation for a mutual right of search, which would most probably, in this instance, have enabled our cruizers, who were lately here, to have prevented these robbers from carrying the intended victims of their cupidity and avarice from the coast." p. 220.

Every account from the coast of Africa, concurred in proving, that the slave-trade could never be extinguished, whilst the right of seizure was limited, as it was in the first instance, to the specific case of ships having slaves actually on board. Our treaties with Spain, Portugal, and the Netherlands, have to a certain extent, met this evil. Spain has consented that wherever there is clear and undeniable proof, that, in the same voyage where the vessel is detained, slaves have been on board, though they may have been subsequently disembarked, the vessel shall notwithstanding be condemned. Portugal adopts the same principle. The Netherlands, in addition, admit, that a certain equipment shall be taken as *prima facie* evidence that such vessel is employed in the slave-trade. The great defect in the provisions of these treaties is this: the letter of the original article, only comprehends the case, where slaves have been once positively embarked; and the subsequent extension in the treaty with the Netherlands, as to the degree of evidence which shall be in the first instance sufficient, seems, in the natural construction of the words, to imply, that this presumptive evidence of the employment arising from the nature of the preparations is to be deemed capable of being disproved by evidence, showing, that slaves had in point of fact never been received on board.—Surely the manifest and unequivocal equipment for a slave voyage should be deemed sufficient proof of the guilty destination. For un-

questionably, if our cruisers are obliged to wait till the embarkation has begun, it will, for the most part, be too late for effectual interference. The *Maidstone*, Commodore Bullen, on a cruise last summer, scarcely visited a port, in which he did not find the wretched beings lying in chains ready to be put on board, as soon as an opportunity offered. Their embarkation, however, is never attempted till the moment that all is ready for sea, and the coast is clear. The *Bella Eliza*, a Brazilian vessel, lately seized by the *Bann*, Captain Courtenay, and condemned at Sierra Leone, was, as appeared by her passport, twice boarded by the British cruisers, whilst she was waiting for her cargo; but, from not having the slaves shipped, could not be molested; although, on the second visit, every thing was in a state of preparation for receiving them from the shore. It came out also on the master's answers, that only six hours were occupied from the time of the first slave being taken from the shore, to the ship's being under weigh, with her whole cargo of 381. Thus these contrabandists are nearly certain of escaping the vigilance of our cruisers, unfortunately, almost their only risk: as, from the superiority of their sailing, when once clear of the land, few of our men of war, (even if they were in the neighbourhood,) have any chance of coming up with them. Every government, therefore, which is really honest in the determination it has expressed, to abolish the slave-trade, will adjust its law to the acknowledged necessity of the case. From the nature of the traffic, and its immense profits, there seems no possibility of putting it down, till a power is obtained of confiscating every vessel which may be found fitted out or destined for the trade under whatever flag, although no slaves may have already been on board.

Portugal still remains a melancholy exception to the concurrent authority of the rest of Europe. She alone, of civilized nations, continues to class the purchase of our fellow-creatures among the ordinary modes of lawful commerce, having only restricted herself by treaty, to carry it on to the southward of the line: and because the English government has been reduced to plead with the different courts of Europe for the interests of mankind, almost as for a matter of

personal favour, she persists in professing to regard this honourable interference as the mere manœuvre of some selfish policy of our own.

The conduct of the French government, although less open and explicit than that of Portugal, is perhaps on this account only the more prejudicial. It perseveres in maintaining at the lowest possible point of practical effect, its co-operation with those humane and enlightened declarations, the verbal subscription to which it had not declined. France is the single government, which, proclaiming the trade to be unlawful, and well aware that its profits are in themselves an ample insurance against the mere risk of simple confiscation, refuses to adopt the only system which other states have found effectual, and to affix an infamous punishment to the offence. Whilst other governments, in evidence of their good faith, are acquiescing in a mutual right to visit and examine suspected vessels, thus precluding all evasion, and giving to every state the benefit of the exertions of the rest, France alone, though professing to act on the same principle, and with the same object, will not even enter into discussion, on what she affects to regard as a compromise of the honour of her flag. In November, 1822, our ambassador was assured by the French government, that the minister of marine should take into his immediate consideration the measures adopted in England, with respect to such vessels as, without having slaves actually on board, should appear by their construction and outfit to be intended to be so employed; but it does not appear, that the officers of the French navy, whose former orders expressly prohibited their interference in such cases, have as yet received any new instructions.

Nations, as well as individuals, are often found with points of honour too refined for ordinary understandings. Otherwise a plan which was cheerfully submitted to by the first maritime power in the world, as consistent no less with the interests of its subjects, than with the honour of its flag, might have been conceived satisfactory to the reasonable expectations, and to the dignity of France,—or it might be doubted whether it were really more honourable to any flag, that instead of condescending to arrangements indispensable to what

the government professed to consider the common cause of man, it should be found protecting, by clandestine connivance, a trade which had been loudly denounced, and nominally abandoned. Wherever the French flag floats on the coast of Africa, it is the signal for devastation: nor is it merely a cover to its own adventurers for the supply of its own colonies, but it extends a flagitious security to the outrage on the laws of their respective governments, which the smugglers of other countries are enabled to perpetrate under its protection.

The other maritime states of Europe have made the experiment for France, and have set an example of the measures which are alone rationally conformable with an intention of putting in execution the treaties in which they all so solemnly have joined. These states may surely complain of a government, which, by its subsequent practice, has paralysed all their efforts, and which then mocks their remonstrances by a mere reference to the philanthropy of the language it can use. But it is unreasonable in France, while she remains the great slave-carrier of the world, and keeps her law in such a state that she *must* remain so, to affect being shocked, that she is suspected of seeking to reconcile the sordid advantages of crime with the outward parade of virtue. It is in vain to protest against the injustice of imputations which by a stroke of the pen, by a single brief enactment, she has it in her power to remove. If the facts of the case are explicable on the supposition of perfect good faith, mankind has still to learn, what are those circumstances which amount to evidence of insincerity. The French government has maintained its reserve, in legislating on the quality of the offence, although it has been recently employed in amending its code of navigation and maritime commerce. It has been in vain, that the friends of humanity and justice during the discussions exposed the discreditable inconsistency of enactments, which went to establish a punishment substantial and disgraceful on the masters of vessels, who by barratry should endanger the property of the owners, while they left to a penalty, recognised as nominal and illusory, this piratical traffic, in which the masters, and the owners, and the crew conspire together, to violate the law by wholesale massacres of their fellow-creatures. The

captain, who, without necessity, throws overboard the goods of his employers, is visited with the whole vengeance of the law; but if he takes on board a greater number of negroes than his vessel can conveniently transport to her place of destination, and, as has lately happened, quietly casts the supernumeraries into the sea, the crime becomes alleviated, and he escapes with comparative, nay with almost entire, impunity.

Public opinion, under the exertions of the abolition committee and other enlightened individuals in France, appears gradually to be acquiring a firmer and louder tone on this subject. Nothing in this respect can be more encouraging than the fact, that a petition against the slave-trade has been lately presented to both chambers. It is the first movement of the kind which the French public has manifested; and when we remember the small beginnings among ourselves, and the magnificent result which followed, too much importance can scarcely be attached to it. The signatures comprise the names of some of the very first merchants and bankers in Paris. Little can be added to the simple force of their remonstrance, and to the conclusiveness of such an inquiry as they propose. After stating the declaration of the allied powers against the slave-trade at Vienna, in 1814; that its abolition was recognized by France, in the year following, as having been agreed to; and that yet no law for its repression was enacted till 1818; they observe, that either the reluctant concurrence of the French government in this measure, or the inefficacy of the law itself, has ended by a contraband continuance of the trade, of which the emporium is Nantz. They express their surprise and sorrow at seeing, in the new project of the law against piracy and barratry, where the most severe punishments are pronounced against all injury to maritime property, that there is no mention made of a crime which consists in robbing whole tribes of their liberty through avarice, and in exposing to the most frightful death, from the tortures of a crowded slave-ship, beings, whom by the Christian religion we are enjoined to regard as brothers. The petition prays that the chamber will collect whatever evidence can be found of the fact of the slave-trade being carried on by French subjects, and in French ships; as it is plain, that, in general



reputation at least, throughout both the old world and the new, France has the greatest share in its present horrors: That the chamber would also take into its consideration the existing law of France upon this subject; namely, a penal law of three clauses, pronouncing only the slightest punishments against an enormity, which is compounded of robbery and of murder, and recognising in the crime but one offender, namely, the captain; although his guilt is shared by the fitters out, the insurers, the advancers of capital, the supercargo, the sailors, and accomplices of every description: That the chamber would compare with this species of legislation, evidently and wilfully deficient, the laws so severe and so detailed of Great Britain, and of the United States; neither of which powers permit a single session to pass without corroborating and completing, by measures of anticipation, the grand fundamental measure of the abolition of the trade itself, which they have at length justly classed with piracy. The petitioners conclude by expressing their conviction, that such an investigation must inevitably end by the proposal of further laws, and by the forming of further treaties, such as the nature of the case imperatively demands.

It is one of the inestimable advantages of public discussion, that these merchants of Nantz should be told, as they have been within this month, by their own representatives,—“If the pirate is a criminal, an armed robber, often an assassin; so the man who orders, or shares in such a traffic, (for there is no difference between the slave-captain who executes, and the merchant who, from his counting-house, in cold blood, gives out to his accomplice this execrable mission,) the man thus sharing and thus ordering is also a criminal, an armed robber, often an assassin.”

Well too, might one of their societies express its horror at the fact that thirty slave-ships had recently sailed from Nantz alone. “Thirty ships, (say they,) belonging to a civilized country, have sailed in the nineteenth century from a single port of one of the most enlightened nations in the world—a nation which honours letters, admires the sciences and the arts, which publicly recognises and professes the religion of Christ; and their ships have sailed, not to communicate to Africa the

blessings of civilized life,—not to go, guided by the spirit of Jesus Christ, that spirit of mercy and of peace, and carry to the inhabitants of Africa, the good tidings of salvation,—but to bear thither terror and desolation, to foment war and carnage, to pollute its shores with the most flagitious crimes, and to condemn thousands of innocent victims to the horrors of the middle passage, unparalleled in the history of the miseries of mankind.”

It is gratifying to observe, that the rising Republics of South America continue to identify their interests, and their own emancipation from political slavery, with the restoration to personal freedom, of the still more degraded members of the human family, the negro slaves.

By a decree of Mexico, every ship, whether national or foreign, arriving in their ports with slaves, is confiscated; a punishment of ten years' imprisonment is inflicted; and all the slaves on board are *ipso facto* declared free.

By the 14th article of a treaty made between Great Britain and the United Provinces of Rio de la Plata, and ratified the 19th of February last, it is declared, that his Britannic majesty, anxiously desiring the abolition of the slave-trade, the United Provinces engage to co-operate in the accomplishment of so beneficial a work, and to prohibit, in the most effectual manner, and by the most solemn laws, all persons residing in the United Provinces, or subject to their jurisdiction from taking any part in the same.

Our legislation at home has, (with the exception of the act, declaring the slave-trade piracy,) been confined to the single bill already mentioned in two previous reports, for consolidating the abolition laws: this has at length passed into a law. One of its most important provisions regards the termination of the inter-colonial slave-trade. By one of its articles, the removal of slaves from island to island is permitted until 1827, under very definite and limited restrictions; and, in 1827, ceases for ever. In the mean time, permission is only to be granted upon application to the king in council, and on proof, to their satisfaction, that such removal is essential to the welfare of the slaves in question. All orders in council which

may be issued in pursuance of this authority are, within the first six weeks of every session, to be laid before both houses of Parliament.

To pass from the state of the law to that of the trade itself, the directors have no ground whatever, for indulging a hope that any material or permanent diminution in the trade has taken place. With the exception of three vessels, two under French and one under Spanish colours, captured about a year ago, by the French Commodore off the Gallinas, it does not appear that the French squadron have offered any effectual interruption or discouragement to this traffic.\* During the whole of 1823, there were never at any one time less than three or four vessels under the French flag, trading for slaves, at the Gallinas and Shebar. This, from the publicity given to it in the Sierra Leone Gazette, if in no other way, must have been well known to the French authorities on the coast, civil, military, and naval; but, during all that time not a capture was made, nor has it appeared that a single ship of war

\* This was the fact at the commencement of the year 1824:—

“ *Sierra Leone, 23d April, 1825.*

“ On Thursday, his most christian majesty’s brig of war Dragon, 18 guns, commanded by captain Lachelier, came into this harbour from a cruise. It affords us infinite pleasure to communicate the intelligence we have received of the French squadron on the coast, having captured twelve slavers; some of which have been sent to Cayenne, and the others to Senegal for adjudication. We may therefore reasonably hope, that some check will be given to the illicit trade, which was fast increasing, as the decisive steps thus taken by his most christian majesty’s cruizers, will be the means of deterring those miscreants engaged in it, who appear as regardless of the laws of humanity as of the government whose protection they claim. Captain Lachelier seemed extremely anxious to put a stop to the abominable traffic and determined on exerting the power placed in his hands for its suppression. A few such zealous officers, aided by the proper encouragement of their government, would, we feel assured, be the most effectual means of putting an end to the prostitution of the white flag upon this coast, and thus convince the world that the French government are at last sincere in their professions for the slave-trade abolition.”

**MEMORANDUM.** Since drawing up the Report, the zeal and activity of captain Lachelier, has apparently caused a considerable alteration in the state of the slave-trade carried on, on the coast of Africa, under the French flag. P. 218.

was sent out after them. Indeed, it seemed to be thought scarcely worth while to make a secret, or to affect reserve, either as to the extent of the French slave-trade, or as to the indifference with which it was regarded by French officers. Within the short space of two months the boats of the Maidstone visited nineteen vessels, all carrying on the trade; yet not one of whom, from the present state of our relations with France, or from the inefficiency of our treaties with other powers, was she authorized to touch. Ten of these were under French colours, furnished with French papers, and belonging to French ports. The object of the voyage was openly avowed and gloried in by some of the masters, who, on our officers going on board, scrupled not to explain, how their victims were to be classed, the particular parts of the vessel appropriated to each, how many they purposed carrying away, with other particulars of their horrible employment. All who choose to buy a set of papers, and a piece of white bunting in a French colony, may under the flag of France, obtain a sanctuary for their property and their crimes. The Maidstone in her cruize seldom saw a vessel which she chased and came up with, but the first gun to heave to was a signal for the hoisting of this flag.

But the French slave-trade is not confined to regular voyages. It is said that every coasting vessel belonging to the French settlements of Goree and Senegal is accustomed regularly to purchase two or three slaves in each successive ship, and to import them into these settlements; that any of the inhabitants may, up to the present day, buy, on the main land or elsewhere, slaves whom he has only to take before the mayor to be registered; and that the French government itself is in the habit of making purchases from the inhabitants, and training the persons so purchased to serve in their garrisons in the forts at Senegal and Goree.

In April, 1824, the *Creole*, a Brazilian schooner, was sent into Sierra Leone by the *Bann*, Captain Courtney. The master of the *Creole* had freighted a brigantine under Spanish colours with 300 slaves, marked on the breast with the letter P. The brigantine, whilst carrying them off to Bahia, had taken the opportunity which slave-ships can so often

practise with impunity, of committing an incidental act of piracy upon an English schooner in her way.

The Victor, lieutenant Scott, sent into Sierra Leone at the end of May a slave-ship, *El Vencedor*, which had been piratically captured by *El Romano*, another slave-ship from the Havanna. A French lugger, *La Henriette Amièe*, whom the pirate had captured in the same manner, was abandoned on the appearance of the Victor, and run on shore in a heavy surf, where she immediately went to pieces. From the number of blacks seen on her decks, there was no doubt that she had embarked her cargo, all of whom perished. A Brazilian brig had sailed with 500 slaves the night before.

Within a few leagues of Prince's Island, the Victor fell in with a schooner boat called *Picaninny Mena*. Though only of five tons burden, she had taken on board in the Gaboon, besides her crew, water, provisions, and some cargo, twenty-three slaves, six of whom had already died. The boat was said to belong to the governor of Prince's; and as she could not, from her bad condition, be navigated to Sierra Leone, she was left under his excellency's care, with a statement of the case. Lieutenant Scott observes, that the negroes were in a state of complete starvation, and approaching dissolution: one died the day the boat was seized.

In August and September last, the *Diana* and the *Two Brazilian Friends* were sent into Sierra Leone by the Victor, Captain Woolcombe; in September, the *Aviso* was sent in by the *Maidstone*, commodore Bullen; and in October, the *Bella Eliza* by the *Bann*, captain Courtney. These four vessels—the first a Portuguese, the others Brazilian—have been subsequently condemned there by the mixed commission court. The *Diana* had 143 slaves on board when detained, of whom she afterwards lost 23 on her passage by the small pox. She had cleared out for Molemba, and had on board a fabricated log purporting to be her journal from that place; but it appeared, by the declaration of her master, that she had taken in her slaves at the river Benin. “Of all the vessels I was on board of,” says Captain Woolcombe, “this was in the most deplorable condition: the stench, from the accumulation of dirt, joined to that of so many human beings packed

together in a small space, (the men all ironed in pairs,) was intolerable. To add to the scene of misery, the small-pox had broken out among them: nine died before we took possession, and one almost immediately after our first boat got along side." The Two Brazilian Friends had 257 slaves on board: she was one of thirteen which sailed about the same time from Bahia to Badagry on the same errand. She had been previously boarded at different times, both by the Maidstone and Bann; but in vain, as the slaves, though then assembled on the beach, had not been on board. Commodore Bullen, who visited this ship, says, "Its filthy and horrid state beggars all description: many females were far advanced in pregnancy, and several had infants from four to twelve months of age; all were crowded together in one mass of living corruption, and yet this vessel had not her prescribed compliment by nearly one hundred."

The Aviso had 465 slaves on board; of whom 34 died after their capture, notwithstanding every attention. Such was the filth and crowd that not half could have reached the Brazils alive. Commodore Bullen put the crew on shore in Prince's Island. These wretches, as soon as they found that they must be boarded, had stove in her boilers, as a last malignant effort to add to the misery of those whom a few minutes would place beyond their power. Commodore Bullen found this vessel in a most crowded and wretched condition, although she had on board 120 less than directed in her passport from Don Pedro, the emperor of the Brazils. At the date of her capture, she had scarcely twenty days' provisions for the slaves, and less water. How they intended to subsist them till their arrival at Bahia, (says the captain,) "is to me a problem, unless they could have calculated on a great decrease from death."

The Bella Eliza, cleared out for Molemba, but took in her cargo at a place known only to slave-dealers by that fraudulent designation; but which is, in fact, the western bank of the river Lagos. She also had been twice boarded by the capturing ship, before, by embarking her victims, she had become liable to be detained. According to the tonnage, as stated in her passport, she was privileged to take 368 slaves:

she had taken on board 381, being thirteen more even than this allowance, of whom twenty-two died before they reached Sierra Leone. The passage lasting seven weeks, the suffering from want of water and provisions was so great that in two days more all hands must have perished. Upon an accurate inspection of these four vessels, to ascertain whether they answered the description in their papers, a remarkable discovery was made of the corrupt and cruel connivance of the official authorities of the Brazils. The tonnage of every vessel is entered in the royal passport, and permission is given to carry a cargo in proportion to that tonnage at the rate of five slaves for every two tons. On admeasurement, the real tonnage was found, in every one of these instances, to be so much less than the tonnage stated in their passport, that the *Diana*, according to its passport, was in fact authorized to take five to each ton; the *Two Brazilian Friends* four to each ton; the *Aviso* above five to each ton; and the *Bella Eliza* at the rate of nearly seven to every two tons. The men's slave-room in the first was only two feet seven inches high, in the second two feet, and in the third two feet three inches.

Taking into calculation the size of the womens' room, and the number shipped, little more than three and one-fourth square feet was allowed to each adult. Indeed, had they attempted to put on board the number to which, according to the false description thus sanctioned by the Brazilian authorities, they would have been entitled, they could not literally have been stowed; although they are stated to have been packed under deck, on deck, and in boats, like beasts. Some of these vessels had on board fierce dogs of the blood-hound species, natives of the Brazils, trained to sit watching over the hatches during the night, lest the wretched beings below should rise either for resistance or for air. Not but that all the precautions which cunning and ferocity can suggest run a risk of being defeated.

In January of the present year, the slaves, (132 in number,) on board *Les Deux Sœurs*, a French cutter, rose on the crew after leaving the *Sherbo*, and murdered eight of them. She was afterwards seized near *Factory Island*, and towed in by an English vessel, and has been since condemned.

Persons who make a trade of human misery are not likely to trouble themselves much about human life. They throw the bodies overboard, whether alive or dead, with much more apparent indifference than they would the sum which they have given for them.

One Oisean, commander of a French slave-ship called *Le Louis*, having completed his cargo on the old Calabar, thrust them all between decks, (a height of only three feet,) and closed the hatches on them for the night. Fifty were found dead in the morning. As a matter of course, he only immediately returned on shore to supply their place. Captain Arnaud, of the *Louisa*, arrived last April, (1824,) at Guadeloupe with 200 negroes, the remainder of an original cargo of 265. Having by mistake purchased more than he could accommodate, he had thrown the odd 65 into the sea.

This brutal hardness of heart is the natural and necessary characteristic of the system. To be captain of a slave-ship is an office that can be only filled by one who has nothing human about him but the form. Facts too, like these just mentioned, are not extraordinary incidents, selected and remembered as such. They are the staple of this trade; and as they are found to belong to almost every instance, which, by being detected, affords an opportunity of being examined, it is mere credulity and blindness not to transfer the picture to the rest. There is not more of cruelty, it may fairly be assumed, in the one vessel which is captured than in the one hundred which escape. Some of those have made eleven, some thirteen successful voyages, and there is little doubt that similar acts of atrocity may have accompanied them all—the same accumulation of human agony, and the same waste of human life.

The French and the Portuguese, though shamelessly pre-eminent, have not a monopoly of this infamy, and of these wholesale murders. Forty-four vessels sailed from the single port of the Havanna for the coast of Africa; and seventeen arrived there from thence, during the last year. Up to February 14th of the present year, two more had sailed, and two cleared out thither, and seven had arrived thence. Captain Forbes was informed that seven sailed in one day whilst he was there; and the Columbian privateers had then lately cap-



tured three with slaves actually on board. Our consul at Cadiz has communicated notice of two Spanish vessels being fitted out in that port last July, and his belief that four more were about to be taken up for this inhuman traffic. "Facts so notorious to others," he adds, "cannot be unknown to the Spanish authorities here, who have in my opinion facilitated the object of the owners of these vessels by granting them licences to carry guns." The owner of one of them, of the name of Tinto, said they were well paid, if one out of four escaped capture.

In January of the present year, a schooner called "the Flower of the Sea," under Dutch colours, was captured by a Columbian cruizer, and the Grecian, Lieutenant Cawley. She was well provided with every thing requisite for carrying on the slave-trade. The captain when examined, (January 4th, 1822,) accounts for his having thrown his papers overboard, by stating them to have been Spanish, and furnished him by the governor of Cuba, and that the schooner was actually Spanish property, and belonged to a M. Dutocq, of Cuba: whereas, on the day before, he had stated her to be the property of a Mr. John Martin, of St. Eustatius. This Mr. John Martin appears to be a Mr. Nathaniel Mussenden, a member of the council of police of St. Eustatius; and this Mr. Mussenden had obtained from the Dutch governor of that place a passport and Dutch flag only on the 11th of December preceding; and though described therein as "the much respected," yet it seems he was so far a suspected person that he had been obliged to enter into a bond of 1600 dollars with the governor, that the vessel should never at any time be found employed under the flag of the Netherlands in the traffic of slaves. But the honourable precaution thus taken by the governor of St. Eustatius was easily evaded. The above named M. Dutocq, along with a letter of credit for 12,000 dollars on the house of Messrs. Cabot, of St. Thomas, and a letter of introduction "for their excellent advice and aid in the accomplishment of the captain's views," gives the parties an express indemnity against this very bond. A letter from this French slave-agent to Messrs. Bannaffe and Lariviere, of Gaudaloupe, was found on board. This specimen of West

Indian correspondence seems a sort of circular, soliciting for custom, and is evidently drawn up in the fashionable language of the trade; language which is calculated to make all except those consignees of human beings, shudder when they reflect on the depth of moral debasement to which it seems our nature may be reduced.

This letter bears date the middle of last December. It opens the secrets of the prison house. It shows the wretched state of damage and of suffering in which the slaves arrive, and the corrupt subservience of the authorities of Cuba down to that time. It holds up to view devoted commandants, and public sales of slaves; the continued success of the Nantz merchants; the scandalous and boasted abuse of the French flag; as well as the language and the feeling of the French and Spanish portion of the West Indies. The following is an extract from it:—"Under the auspices of Mr. Couronneau of Bordeaux, our friend, we have the honour of tendering to you our services at this place. You know, gentlemen, that the advantage which our market offers for the disposal of *Ebony* gives it a great preference over any other of our colonies; and it strikes us that it would suit you to send to it a few shipments of that sort. We have received this year a great many cargoes of that article, on account of merchants of Nantz: and towards the end of January, we expect here, other ships that have sailed from the last-mentioned port. All our sales have been attended with favourable results. The last cargo sold here, was that of the Harriett of Nantz: 328 logs were disposed of on their landing, (those that were damaged excepted,) at 225 dollars each. This merchandise was of a very ordinary nature, and had suffered much: by getting rid of the article at once you may make a much better thing of it." After some particular instructions it proceeds: "The commandant, who is devoted to us, would deliver a letter of instructions for the captain: when once the cargo is on shore, all risk is at an end.—We have this day to communicate to you a circumstance that will no doubt afford you as much interest as it does to us.

"The brig, 'Two Nations,' Captain Pettier, which had lately been captured by an English cruizer, (at the moment when she appeared before Uruguay with a cargo of ebony,)

and carried to Kingston, has been released; the admiral having declared that no one had the right of capturing the French flag: in consequence of this, the brig returned to Uragua, where she landed 456 logs. Had the wood been good, it would have had a fine sale; but owing to the bad state of the bulk of the cargo, which had suffered much, it is of the smallest kind. The liberation of this vessel offers to us the assurance that our flag will henceforth be respected. The three vessels that were cruising upon our coast were immediately recalled to Jamaica. As to the Dutch, there is only one English vessel of war in our latitude commissioned to capture them; the others are altogether interdicted that right. We consider, therefore, that there is no longer any risk upon our coast; and that vessels may present themselves with all safety before Uragua, where we constantly keep a pilot. The sales meet with no opposition, and are carried on in some measure publicly.'

King Radama had suppressed the slave-trade through the whole extent of Madagascar, which is subject to his dominion. To that part of the island which does not acknowledge his authority, he sent an army last summer to compel their submission. The result is not yet known. The French claim sovereignty at a place called Fort Dauphin in that quarter, where they maintain an agent. From an entrepôt in its neighbourhood, they are carrying on an active slave-trade with the eastern coast of Africa; and they have two vessels constantly employed in bringing over slaves, whom they afterwards put on board smaller craft for the supply of Bourbon.

Commodore Moorsom was sent last summer to remonstrate with the governor of Mozambique, on the French slave-trade being permitted in that Portuguese territory. The governor admitted the fact and its illegality, but pleaded that he had no means of stopping it. Commodore Moorsom, on the contrary, believes that he connives at it, and that he had even received 4000 dollars, on account of slaves shipped by French traders, during 1823. The duty on slaves from Mozambique, in 1823, amounted to 66,000 dollars, and was raised on the sale of 16,500 slaves.

The French obtain their slaves in great measure from the native chiefs on the coast between Cape Delgado and Quiloa, who are subject neither to Portugal nor to the Imaum of Muscat, and also from Quiloa. Captain Owen in confirmation of this statement, observes that the slave-trade on the eastern coast of Africa had received a new impulse for the supply of Brazil. This diabolical commerce seemed the only one capable of inspiring the miserable remains of the Portuguese population with energy. He found seven vessels in the port, preparing their cargoes for Rio Janeiro; one of 600 tons, for 1200 slaves. The annual number exported from Mozambique, he computes at 15,000, being 1500 less than that on which duty was paid in 1823. The number exported from Quilliman in 1823, he estimates at 10,000 more. A slave in the first instance, he observes, does not cost more than two or three Spanish dollars to the Portuguese dealer, who obtains for him twenty or thirty dollars from the captain of the vessel, and who again sells them at Rio Janeiro, for 150 or 200 dollars. Some vessels are so fortunate, he says, as to save alive half their cargoes; but it is considered, on the whole, an excellent voyage where they save one-third. The country round Quilliman formerly supplied Mozambique with food, and is capable of producing it to any extent; but since the slave-trade has been carried on there, it not only has no surplus produce to export, but is become itself dependent upon foreign supply for its subsistence. The neighbouring tribes are kept in a constant ferment by the slave-trade. Captain Owen states expressly, that the commandant of the Portuguese factory had himself provoked wars between the different tribes, that he might get slaves cheap, and that for each of them, he actually paid in goods no more than about half a dollar. He felt himself obliged to remonstrate with the government of Mozambique on the continued infractions of the existing treaties between our nations, which it was his misfortune to witness; and he has informed our government, that "all the Portuguese authorities, every where on the coast, still either enter into, or take part in this infamous trade, with such adventurers as present themselves in its pursuit, or by their connivance and imbecility afford such facilities to

their success as cannot fail to render vain its total suppression."

The civilization of Africa can never proceed until the slave-trade is put down beyond a hope or possibility of return. To suspend it, to alternate between a year of repose and a year of plunder, to give the bud just time to germinate, and then to tread it under foot, is little better than a machinery for adding to the growth and the number of the victims, and for rendering, by the contrast, their sufferings more intense.

The appearance of a slave-ship demoralizes the whole neighbourhood: it offers a premium on their evil passions, which the slave-trading chiefs cannot be expected to resist, till a long experience of the benefits of a contrary system has weaned them from their former habits.

The trade from the Sherbro to Mesurado, which had of late been comparatively free, is now as bad as in former times. The wars there, for the supply of the Gallinas, have again laid waste that fertile country, which had begun to thrive after the cessation of the British slave-trade. The hostilities in which these slave-haunts are now themselves involved, are owing to the two causes, avarice and vengeance, both equally arising out of the slave-trade. The nations at their back, jealous of the monopoly which was obtained by their position, have borne down on them to seize, by force, a partnership in its spoils; whilst other natives from the interior, have been combined and brought down to the coast by the villainy of the chiefs of the slave-factories on the river. At times, when there was a scarcity of slaves, they have completed their cargo, by seizing and shipping off whole caravans of free men, who were bringing their produce for barter. It seems that these chiefs, speculating on the interests of their own slave-market, invited the Kissoos in the first instance to commence this war on the Bulloms, and that, by a just retribution, the Kissoo head-men now threaten to pay off their wrongs, by burning every village which these mansellers possess.

The merchants of the Isles de Loss, taking advantage of a diminution of the slave-trade, endeavoured to replace it by

lawful commerce, and, during the three first months of last year, exported from the river Nunez, 12,000 hides, besides wax, ivory, rice, and gold: but a few months later, and a Spanish slave-vessel arrived; and although all the white traders, except a Portuguese, refused to have any thing to do with it, yet the natives were so unsettled by the temptation of those articles, which any trade consistent with their improvement must have more slowly and laboriously supplied, that they threatened to destroy the house of an individual who requested the captain to move the vessel from his wharf. But Bissao is the great curse of northern Africa: and the Portuguese, not content with the distinction of being the only European nation which authorizes, by law, the purchase of human beings, have lately saved themselves, in more than one instance, the expense of the purchase money. After attacking native towns in the night, and killing all who resist, they have kidnapped the survivors for themselves. Whilst two respectable merchants of the Isle de Loss were in the Rio Nunez, one of these expeditions entered, burnt a town, and carried off eighteen inhabitants to Bissao. As long as that wretched country may either be thus bribed to relapse, or be forcibly plunged into such horrors, little can be attempted in the furtherance of the objects of this institution, in comparison with those results which arrangements of ordinary justice and security might of themselves accomplish. Men will not sow a field to-day, which is to-morrow to be the place of battle. The present king of the Soolimas, in his conversations with Captain Laing, recurred frequently to the strong temptation to continue the trade in slaves, whilst white men could be found to purchase them: because money, (he said,) was got for them so easily and certainly, whilst new modes were doubtful until tried, and might take much trouble to establish. Here is a great and immediate cause of the degradation of Africa, for which Europe is mainly accountable, and which Europe can remove. It ill becomes those who were fearless and indefatigable whilst they were guilty and unjust, to show themselves faint-hearted and easily discouraged, as soon as they have commenced their work of re-

paration and of mercy. We are not entitled to weigh in golden scales our labour and its results. We are in the situation of persons who have committed the grossest of all injuries, and when called upon for compensation must not seek to avoid it, by collateral inquiries into the character and merits of the individuals we have wronged. But taking it most strictly, it is only when a sufficient period shall have elapsed after a total suppression of the slave-trade, for its last effects to have died away, that the time will have arrived, when, with the least decency or pretence to fairness, any one can pronounce a judgment against the capabilities either of Africa, for an extended commerce, or of its inhabitants for the arts and institutions of Europe. That the slave-trade is directly answerable for that alleged inferiority of which it afterwards seeks to take such criminal advantage, is proved by a fact which has been often adverted to, and in which Africa is an exception to every other quarter of the globe. Civilization elsewhere, naturally growing out of commerce, has been first seen on the shore, and by the river side: and has afterwards crept on by degrees into the more inland country. But Park found the interior of Africa in an advanced condition compared with the coast; and Captain Laing, in his late journey from Sierra Leone to Soolimana, a distance less than that between York and London, observed the same successive degrees of civilization, approaching almost to different stages of society, as he receded from the slave-trade and the sea. The Soolimas were more intelligent than the inhabitants of any country through which he had passed, to reach them; and the people of Sangara, who lay in a line more backward still, were proved, by their manufactures and their arts, to be proportionably further advanced. Thus has this horrible commerce reversed a law in the history of the human race, so that the improvement of a nation is measured by the difficulty of its communications. A lawful commerce and a pure religion will be alone sufficient to remove this anomaly and reproach.